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Applicants' Claim 1 recites: "[A] method of manufacturing an electronic device, a semiconductor device in particular but not exclusively, which method comprises the steps of:

- applying a semiconductor substrate (1) which is provided with a conductor (3,4,5) at a surface (2), the conductor (3,4,5) having a top surface portion (6) and sidewall portions (7), of which at least the top surface portion (6) is provided with an etch stop layer (12),
- applying a dielectric layer (13),
- etching a via (14,15,16) in the dielectric layer (13) over the conductor (3,4,5), and stopping on the etch stop layer (12) to create an exposed part of the etch stop layer (12),
- removing the exposed part of the etch stop layer (12) inside the via (14,15,16) from at least the top surface portion (6) of the conductor (3,4,5),
- filling the via (14,15,16) with a conductive material (18) characterized in that a layer comprising silicon carbide is applied as the etch stop layer (12)."

Boeck fails to recite or suggest the etch stop layer comprising silicon carbide. Rather, Boeck recites etch stops of silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, silicon oxynitride, or aluminum nitride (see, e.g., Col. 6, line 65 to Col. 7, line 2). As a result, Boeck fails to teach every element of Applicants' Claim 1.

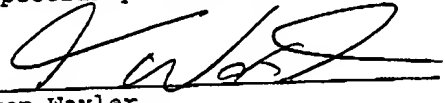
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Consequently, Claim 1 is believed patentable over Boeck for at least these reasons.

Claims 2-11 depend from independent Claim 1 above and are believed patentable for at least the same reasons. In addition, however, each is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, and should be individually considered on its own merits.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the currently-pending claims are clearly patentably distinguishable over the cited and applied references. Accordingly, entry of this amendment, reconsideration of the rejections of the claims over the references cited, and allowance of this application is earnestly solicited. Applicants' undersigned Agent can be contacted at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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